

Message Text

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11

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 IGA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-12 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 IO-13 NIC-01

RSR-01 /141 W

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R 141450Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2010

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3099

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PGOV NU

SUBJECT: POLITICAL SUMMARY - JUNE 30-JULY 13, 1973

REF: MANAGUA 2963

1. CONSTRUCTION STRIKE -- THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' STRIKE WHICH HAS HALTED ALMOST ALL MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN MANAGUA FOR THE PAST MONTH CONTINUES DESPITE INTENSIFIED GON EFFORTS TO END IT. ON MONDAY, JULY 9, GENERAL SOMOZA CALLED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS TO RETURN TO THEIR JOBS AND ELECT NEW LEADERS (HE HAS JAILED MOST OF THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP) AFTER WHICH "THE GOVERNMENT WOULD WELCOME THEIR DEMANDS AND NEGOTIATE THEM IN THE SAME JUST AND EQUITABLE MANNER THAT IT HAS IN THE PAST." GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED LABOR FORCES ARE ATTEMPTING TO ORGANIZE A MORE AMENABLE CONSTRUCTION UNION TO UNDERCUT SCAAS, THE ANTI-SOMOZA, COMMUNIST DOMINATED UNION, WHICH CALLED THE STRIKE. ON JULY 11, LABOR MINISTER NAVARRO RICHARDSON UNSUCCESSFULLY APPROACHED THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF CUS, NICARAGUA'S AIFLD ASSISTED DEMOCRATIC

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LABOR CONFEDERATION, TO UNDERTAKE THE TASK. THE GON IS ENCOURAGED

THAT ITS MANUEVERS TO END THE STRIKE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL BY REPORTS FROM THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES THAT OVER 50 O/O OF THEIR WORKERS ARE READY TO ABANDON THE STRIKE AND RETURN TO WORK. THE LABOR MINISTER HOPES THEY WILL BE BACK ON THE JOB BY MONDAY, JULY 16. COMMENT: MOST OBSERVERS DOUBT THAT SOMOSISTA LABOR LEADERS, WHO ARE DISCREDITED IN NICARAGUA'S ORGANIZED LABOR CIRCLES, WILL BE ABLE TO CREATE AN EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO SCAAS WHICH HAS DEMONSTRATED GOOD ORGANIZATION AND ALREADY HAS ONE RECENTLY SUCCESSFUL STRIKE UNDER ITS BELT. A MORE LIKELY SOLUTION TO THE STRIKE WILL BE A FACE-SAVING DEAL WHEREBY AT LEAST SOME OF THE UNION'S MEMBERS WILL RETURN TO THE JOBS WITH PRE-ARRANGED SALARY INCREASES FORMALLY NEGOTIATED SOON THEREAFTER. END COMMENT.

2. MEDICAL STRIKE -- GON ORDERS FIRING STRIKING RESIDENTS AND STAFF DOCTORS WERE EXECUTED ON JULY 10 AND 11 IN ACCORDANCE WITH NICARAGUAN LAWS AGAINST STRIKES BY PUBLIC EMPLOYEES. ACCORDING TO THE LABOR MINISTER, THE GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO GRANT ALL THE DEMANDS OF STRIKERS EXCEPT A SALARY INCREASE, BUT THE OFFER WAS REJECTED. THE LABOR MINISTER IS OPTIMISTIC THAT REPLACEMENTS FOR THE DISCHARGED PHYSICIANS WILL BE READILY FOUND, BUT IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE GON HAS, AS IT CLAIMS, FULLY RESOLVED ITS MEDICAL STAFFING PROBLEMS AND RESTOGED HOSPITAL CARE TO PRE-STRIKE LEVELS.

3. NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY MEETS -- IN WHAT HAS BECOME A RARE EVENT, THE ASSEMBLY MET JULY 12 FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ALMOST A MONTH TO APPROVE FUNDS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM. THE DEPUTIES ALSO COLLECTED THEIR MONTHLY SALARIES. RESPECTED PAGUAGA CONSERVATIVE DEPUTY EDUARDO CHAMORRO LIVENED THINGS UP WITH AN UNUSUAL, FOR THE PAGUAGA OPPOSITION, SPEECH DEPLORING THE MARGINAL ROLE ALLOWED THE ASSEMBLY BY SOMOZA AND CALLING FOR IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT OF THREE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES TO INVESTIGATE THE CONSTRUCTION STRIKE, THE DOCTORS STRIKE AND MEDICAL CARE SITUATION AND ALLEGED CORRUPTION IN DEALS OF THE NATIONAL HOUSING BANK. THE LIBERAL LEADERSHIP WILL PRESUMABLY IGNORE THIS MOTION. COMMENT: THE ASSEMBLY'S ALMOST TOTOAL INACTIVITY SINCE THE EARTHQUAKE HAS CAUSED A FURTHER DECLINE IN ITS ALREADY LOW PRESTIGE. IT IS NOW IN THE SAD CONDITION OF BEING NOT ONLY A "RUBBER STAMP" CONFIDENTIAL

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BUT AN UNUSED RUBBER STAMP. END COMMENT.

4. LIBERAL PARTY CELEBRATES -- THE BAN ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY IS NOT DETERRING PLN STALWARTS FROM COMMEMORATING THE DAY ON JULY 11, 1893 WHEN GENERAL SANTOS ZELAYA FIRST BROUGHT THE PARTY TO POWER BY OVERTHROWING THE ELECTED GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT ROBERTO SACASA, THEREBY INITIATING A PERIOD OF 18 YEARS OF PERSONAL ZELAYA RULE. ALTHOUGH ONLY CEREMONIES WERE HELD IN MANAGUA,

WHICH IS STILL UNDER MARTIAL LAW, MAJOR CELEBRATIONS AND BANQUETS ARE BEING HELD THROUGHOUT THE WEEK IN OTHER CITIES. GRANADA AND LEON ARE VYING TO SEE WHICH CAN STAGE THE BIGGEST AFFAIR TO PROCLAIM THE CANDIDACY OF GENERAL SOMOZA FOR PRESIDENT IN 1974. GENERAL SOMOZA, HOWEVER, IS NOT APPEARING PERSONALLY AT EITHER EVENT.

5. OPPOSITION ACTIVITY -- THE JUNE 30 SACASA-CHAMORRO "SOMMONS" (MANAGUA A-37) TO THE NATIONAL CONTINUES TO RECEIVE EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FROM VARIOUS OPPOSITION FIGURES. SPOKESMAN FOR CONSERVATIVE LEADER AGUERO (PCN-A) SAID THAT DR AGUERO AGREED WITH THE STATEMENT BUT INSISTED THAT IT WAS ONLY A REPETITION OF WHAT DR AGUERO HAD PUBLICLY DECLARED AT A MEETING JUNE 16, ADDING THAT THE OPPOSITION WAS ALWAYS WELCOME TO UNITE AROUND DR AGUERO AND THE PCN-A. OPPOSITION LEADERS ARE CONTINUING WORKING GROUP SESSIONS TO STUDY FURTHER MEASURES.
SHELTON

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